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WAKEA THE POLYNESIAN

(By Rev. W. D. Westervelt in Paradise of the Pacific.)

The fountain source of the Mississippi has been discovered and re-discovered. The origin of the Polynesian race has been a subject for discovery and re-discovery. The older theory of Malay origin as set forth in the earlier encyclopaedias is now recognized as untenable. The Malays followed the Polynesians rather than preceded them. The comparative study of Polynesian legends leads almost irresistibly to the conclusion that Polynesians were Aryans, coming at least from India to Malasia and possibly coming from Arabia, as Fornander of Hawaii so earnestly argues. It is now accepted that the Polynesians did not originate from Malay parentage, and that they did occupy for an indefinite period the region around the Sunda Straits from Java to the Molucca Islands, and also that the greater portion of the Polynesians was driven out from this region and scattered over the Pacific in the early part of the Christian Era. The legends that cluster around Wakea have greatly aided in making plain some things concerning the disposition of the Polynesians. By sifting the legends of Hawaii-loa, we learn how the great voyager becomes one of the first Vikings of the Pacific. His home at last is found to be Gilolo of the Molucca Islands. From the legends we become acquainted with Wakea (possibly meaning "noonday" or "the white time") and his wife Pana ("earth"), the most widely remembered of all the ancestors of the Polynesian race. Their names are found in the legends of the most prominent island groups, and the highest places are granted them among the demi-gods and sometimes among the chief deities. Their deeds belong to the most ancient times—the creation or discovery of the various islands of the Pacific world. Those who worshipped Wakea and Papa are found in such widely separated localities that it must be considered impossible for even a demi-god to have had so many names. Atea or Wakea was one of the highest gods of the Marquesas Islands. Here his name means "light." The Marquesans evidently look back of all their present history and locate Atea in the ancient home land. Va-tea, in the Society Islands, Wakea in Hawaii and New Zealand, Makea-Wakea and Akea are phonetic variations of the one name when written down by the students who made a written form for words repeated from generation to generation by word of mouth alone. Even under the name Wakea this ancient chief is known by most widely separated islands. The only reasonable explanation for this widespread reference to Wakea is that he was an ancestor belonging in common to all the scattered Polynesians. It seems as if there must have been a period when Wakea was king or chief of a united people. He must have been of great ability and probably was the great king of the United Polynesians. If this were the fact it would naturally result that his memory would be carried wherever the dispersed race might go.

In the myths and legends of the Hervey Islands, Vatea is located near the beginning of their national existence. First of all the Hervey Islands place Te-ake-i-roe—"The root of all existence." There, there came upon the ancient world Te Vaea, "the breath" or "the life." Then came the god time—Te Manawa roa, "the long ago." Then their creation legends locate Vaea, a woman whose name means "the beginning," a name curiously similar to the Hebrew word bara, creation, as in Gen. 1:1. Her children were torn out of her breasts and given homes in the ancient mist land, with which without any preparation or introduction, Hawa-iki is confused in a part of the legend. One of the children of Vaea dwelt in "a sacred tabu island" and became the god of the fish. Another sought a home "where the red parrots' feathers were gathered"—the royal feathers for the high chief's garments. Another became the echo-god and lived in the "hollow grey rocks." Another as the gods of the winds went far out on the deep ocean. Another, a girl, found a home, "the silent land," with mother. Wakea, or Vatea, the eldest of this family remained in Ava-iki (Hawaii) the ancestral home—"the bright land of Vatea." Here he married Papa. This Ava-iki was to the Herveyites of later generations the fiery volcano under-world. When the long sea voyages ceased after some centuries, the islanders realized that Ava-iki was very closely connected with their history. They had but a misty idea of far-off lands, and they did know of earthquakes and lava caves and volcanic fires—so they located Ava-iki as the secret world under their islands. This underworld with legendary inconsistency was located on the ocean's surface, when it became necessary to have their islands discovered by the descendants of Vatea. According to the Hervey legends, Vatea is the father of Lono and Kanaloa, two of the great gods of the Polynesians. They are twins. Lono has three sons, whom he sends away. They sail out through many heavens and from Ava-iki "pull up" out of the deep ocean two of the Hervey Islands. The natives of the Hervey group supposed that the horizon around their group inclosed the world. Beyond this world were heavens after heavens. A daring voyager by sailing through the sky line would break out from this world into an unknown world or a heaven bounded by new horizons. Strangers thus "broke through" from heaven to heaven, sometimes making use of the path of the sun. Thus about twenty-five generations ago Raa (possibly Laa, the Hawaiian), broke down the horizon's bars and established a line of kings in Raiatea. So tabulated the natives said to the Hervey Islands the natives said: "Whence comes this strange thing? It has climbed up (come up forcibly) from the thin land the home of Wakea."

THE VILLAIN OF THE PIECE.



Now that the theatrical season is in full swing, the photographers' studios are full of actors in curious garbs, posing in scenes from plays of the moment.

He had pierced the western heavens from which their ancestors had come. When the sons of Lono unexpectedly saw a speck of land far away over the sea, they cried out that here was a place created for them by their deified ancestors. As they came nearer they "pulled up" the islands until they grew to be high mountains rising from the deep waters. In these mountains they found the lava caves and deep chasms which they always said extended down under the seas back to Ava-iki. They made their caves a passageway for spirits to the fairy home of the dead, and therefore into certain chasms east of the bodies of the dead that the spirit might more easily find the path to the underworld.

Vatea was a descendant of "the long ago," according to the Hervey legend. Wakea of Hawaii was a son of Kahiko, "the ancient." Wakea's home is more definitely stated in the Hawaiian than in the Hervey legends. He lived in O-Lolo-i-mehani, or the Red Lolo, a name confidently referred by Fornander in "The Polynesian Race" to Gilolo, the principal island of the Moluccas. The red Lolo as suggested by Fornander, would refer not alone to volcanic action and its decaying debris, but would fittingly designate the largest and most important island of the group. The fire bursting from many volcanoes in the region of the Sunda Straits was "royal" to the beholders, who felt that divine power was present in the mysterious red flames. Hence all the Polynesian tribes invested the red color with especial dignity as a mark of royalty and preeminence. It was on the banners allowed only to chiefs when their boats sailed away to visit distant lands. It was the color of their war cloaks.

In the recent days of the monarchy of Hawaii, the richest crimson was the only color allowed in upholstery for the great throne room. Gilolo might wittingly bear the name "The red Lolo" in Hawaiian story. Here Hawaii-loa, the first of the Polynesian Vikings, had his home. Here the Chieftainess Oupe, a Polynesian princess, dwelt. In O Lolo Wakea married the granddaughter of Oupe, whose name was Papa. She is almost as widely known in legends as her husband. Papa was said to be a tabu descendant of Hawaii-loa and therefore superior in rank to Wakea. Papa is described as "very fair and almost white." Her name means "earth," and Wakea's name might mean "noonday." This, with the many experiences through which they both passed, would lay the foundation for a very pretty sun-myth, but we cannot avoid the human aspect of the legends and give them both a more worthy position as ancestors of a scattered people.

Kahiko, the ancient, is recorded as having had three sons from whom descended the chiefs, the priests and the common people—the husbandmen—almost a Shem Ham and Japheth division. Other legends, however, give Kahiko only two sons, the eldest, Wakea, having power both as chief and priest. All the legends unite in making Wakea the head of the class of chiefs. This would very readily explain the high place held by Wakea throughout Polynesia and also the jealous grasp upon genealogical records maintained by the royal families of the Pacific.

Wakea and Papa are credited with being the creators of many island kingdoms of the Pacific. One of the Hawaiian legends goes back of the creation or discovery of Hawaii and ascribes the creation of the world to Wakea and Papa. The two were living together in a "Po"—"darkness" or "chaos." Papa brought into existence a gourd, calabash including bowl and cover, with the pulp and seeds inside. Wakea threw the cover upward and it became heaven. From the pulp and seeds he made the sky and the sun and moon and stars. From the juice of the pulp he made the

rain. The bowl he fashioned into the land and sea.

Other legends limit the creative labors of Wakea to the Hawaiian group. With the aid of Papa he established a portion of the islands; then discord entered the royal family and a separation was decided upon. The Hawaiian custom has always been for either chief or chieftainess to exercise the right to divorce and to contract the marriage ties. Wakea is said to have divorced Papa by spitting in her face according to an ancient custom. Wakea selected a chieftainess named Hina, from whom the island Molokai (the leper island) received the name Molokai-hina—the ancient name of the island. Morotai was also an island lying near Gilolo in the Molucca group, and might be the place from which Wakea secured his bride. Papa selected as her new husband a chief named Lua. The ancient name of Oahu (the island upon which Honolulu is located) was Oahu-a-lua, "the Oahu of Lua." One of the Celebes Islands bears a name for one of its districts very similar to Oahu—"Ouah-jua."

Papa seems to have been partially crazed by her divorce. She married many husbands. She voyages back and forth between distant islands. In an ancient island Tahiti, she bears children from whom the Tahitians claim descent. In the Celebes she and her people experience a famine and she is compelled to send to O Lolo for food. In New Zealand legends she becomes the wife of Langi (Hawaiian lani or heaven), a union of "earth" and "heaven." They have six children. Four of these are the chief gods of ancient Hawaii: Kane, "light," "the builder"; Lono, "sound," and Kanaloa. Two of the children are not named in Hawaiian annals, unless it might be that one, Ta Whirri, should be represented in Kahiko, the tall standard limited for centuries as the insignia of the very high chief families. The other name, Haumia, might possibly be Haumea, a second name given to Papa in the legends.

The Maoris of New Zealand deify all of these six sons of Lani and Papa. Kane was "father of forests." He was very strong. In ancient days the sky was not separated from the earth. He lifted up the heavens and pushed down the earth—and thus made space for all things to grow. It was while the sky rested its full weight upon the earth that the leaves started into life, but were flat and thin because there was no chance to become plump and full like the fruit which came later. Here is the foundation for another sun-myth of the Pacific, wherein it might be said light came and separating darkness from the earth brought life into the world. Light could well be "the father of forests."

The second son was Tawhirri, "the father of winds and storms." A part of his name was "matea," which might possibly be referred to Wakea. He dwelt in the skies with his father Lani. The third son was Lono, who was "the father of all cultivated food." The fourth was Haumia, "the father of uncultivated food"—such food as grew wild in the forests or among the herbs or in the midst of the edible sea mosses.

The fifth son was Kanaloa, "the father of all reptiles and fishes," at first dwelling in Hawaii on the land with all his descendants. The sixth son was Ku "with the red face," "the father of fierce or cruel men." Ku was easily made angry, and after a time waged war against his brothers and their followers. There was great destruction, but Ku could not win the victory alone. He was compelled to call upon Tawhirri, "the father of winds and storms." Fierce men and fierce storms made it difficult for the remainder of the household to escape. The "father of forests" bowed to the earth under the terrific force of hurricanes.

The "father of foods" buried himself deep in the ground to escape destruction at the hands of cruel mankind and tempestuous nature. Then came the bitter conflict between the family of Kanaloa and their combined enemies. Cruel men were without pity in the blows dealt against their interior kindred and at last separated the household of Kanaloa. The "fish" fled to the sea and sought safety in distant waters, finding homes where the children of Ku did not care to follow. The reptiles fled inland to the secret recesses of the mountains and forests. There they have kept their wild savage life through the centuries even to the present day, as in Sumatra, Borneo, the Celebes, the Philippines and other sections of the region around the Sunda Straits. They are not now ocean lovers any more than in the ages past. They do not "go down to the sea in ships." Neither do they love the coming of Dutch or Spanish or American civilization. They seem to have an hereditary dislike for strange and cruel men.

The sea rovers became great wanderers, carrying with them the names of Kanaloa and his brothers and planting them in almost all of the Pacific islands to be worshipped as the supreme gods. How much these domestic troubles surrounding the name of Papa may have had to do with an early migration of the Polynesians we do not know. It may be that while the household was engaged in war, the Malays came from the north and with tornado power scattered the divided family, compelling swift flight to distant lands. It is now thought that the great dispersion of the Polynesians came from the incursions of the powerful Malays during the second century of the Christian Era. Some of the Hawaiian and New Zealand legends imply that for a number of generations a part of the Polynesians remained in the old family home, Hawaii. The New Zealanders enter quite fully into the account of the troubles attending the coming of their ancestors from Hawaii. They mention battles and domestic discords. They tell of the long journeys and wearisome efforts put forth until their ancestors find Northern New Zealand, Ke-a-to-roa, the great white land. This was pulled up out of the sea for them by Maui with his wonderful fish hook. This story of the magic fishing of the disobedient and mischievous Maui is common in Polynesia.

After the discovery of New Zealand, boats were sent back to Hawaii to induce large companies of colonists to leave the land of warfare and trouble and settle in the rich lands bordering the beautiful bays of New Zealand. Similar stories of discovery of new lands and return for friends adorn the legends of all Polynesia. Wakea's descendants were clanish and stood by each other in that great migration of the second century as well as in the better remembered journey of later years. There seems to have been a continued migration of the Polynesians. Sometimes they were apparently fought off by the black race, as in Australia. Sometimes they held their own for a time, keeping the black men inland, as in Fiji, and sometimes they struck out boldly for new lands, as when they sailed long distances to the Hawaiian and Easter Islands. It is said that the purest forms of the Polynesian language, most harmonious with one another, were carried by the children of Wakea to the far island of New Zealand, Easter Island, Hawaii, Samoa and the Society group.

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